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Van Woerkom fights amendment to unfairly penalize Muskegon in “racino” legislation

LANSING – In keeping with his personal convictions, Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom, R-Norton Shores, today voted no on legislation to allow the placement of racinos, slot machines at horse tracks, around the state.

However, Van Woerkom sponsored an amendment to House Bill 4610 that prevented Muskegon from being unfairly penalized should the bill become law.

“I do not support gambling in Michigan, therefore I could not in good conscience vote for legislation to bring more gambling into the state,” Van Woerkom said. “But my amendment protects the residents of Muskegon from unfair treatment if these ‘racinos’ become a reality.”

Van Woerkom moved to protect Muskegon after HB 4610 was amended to prohibit racinos from being located within a 100-mile radius of an Indian casino. The provision would have penalized Muskegon because of the proximity to the casino in Manistee.

HB 4610 passed by a 20-18 vote. It now returns to the House of Representatives.

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